

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1-32, 36-39, 41 and 47 are requested to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Claims 40, 42, 43, 44 and 46 are currently being amended.

Claims 54-57 are being added.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 33-35, 40, 42-46 and 48-57 are now pending in this application.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 33-35 and indicating that claims 41-43, 47 and 50-53 contain allowable subject matter, which would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten independent claim 40 to include the allowable subject matter of dependent claim 41; independent claim 44 to include the allowable subject matter of dependent claim 47; and allowable dependent claims 50-53 have been rewritten as independent claims 54-57.

Claims 1-32, 36-39, 41 and 47 have been canceled, rendering the prior art rejections moot. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 USC § § 102 and 103 is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-2228. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a

check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 50-2228. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 50-2228.

Respectfully submitted,

Date February 23, 2004

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